PENDING CLAIMS AS AMENDED

1. (Cancelled)

2. (New) A method of communicating from a base station, comprising:

transmitting speech encoded at a first average data rate associated with an encoding mode selected from a plurality of encoding modes; and

receiving speech in response to the transmitted speech, the received speech being encoded at a second average data rate that is higher than the first average data rate.

3. (New) The method of claim 2 further comprising encoding the transmitted speech, and decoding the received speech.

4. (New) The method of claim 3 wherein the decoding of the speech comprises selecting a decoding mode from a plurality of decoding modes, the selected decoding mode being associated with the second data rate, and wherein each unselected decoding mode is associated with an average data rate that is higher than the first average data rate.

5. (New) The method of claim 4 wherein the selection of the decoding mode is a function of the selected encoding mode.

6. (New) The method of claim 4 wherein the encoding of the transmitted speech comprises receiving a plurality of first speech frames, and selecting between a full rate frame and a less than full rate frame for each of the first speech frames, and wherein the decoding of the received speech comprises a receiving a plurality of second speech frames, and selecting between a full rate frame and a less than full rate frame for each of the second speech frames.

7. (New) The method of claim 6 wherein the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the first speech frames is a function of the selected encoding mode, and the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the second speech frames is a function of the selected decoding mode.

8. (New) The method of claim 7 wherein the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the first speech frames is further a function of one or more speech parameters of such first speech frame, and the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the second speech frames is further a function of one or more speech parameters of such second speech frame.

9. (New) The method of claim 6 wherein the less than full rate frame comprises a 1/2 rate frame, 1/4 rate frame, or 1/8 rate frame.

10. (New) The method of claim 2 wherein the selection of the encoding mode is a function of base station capacity.

11. (New) A method of communicating from a subscriber station, comprising:

receiving speech encoded at a first average data rate; and

transmitting speech in response to the received speech, the transmitted speech being encoded at a second average data rate associated with an encoding mode selected from a plurality of encoding modes, the second average data rate being higher than the first average data rate.

12. (New) The method of claim 11 wherein each unselected encoding mode is associated with an average data rate that is higher than the first average data rate.

13. (New) The method of claim 11 further comprising decoding received speech, and encoding the transmitted speech.

14. (New) The method of claim 13 wherein the decoding of the received speech comprises selecting a decoding mode from a plurality of decoding modes, the selected decoding mode being associated with the first data rate.

15. (New) The method of claim 14 wherein the selection of the encoding mode is a function of the selected decoding mode.

16. (New) The method of claim 14 wherein the decoding of the received speech comprises receiving a plurality of first speech frames, and selecting between a full rate frame and a less than full rate frame for each of the first speech frames, and wherein the encoding of the transmitted speech comprises a receiving a plurality of second speech frame, and selecting between a full rate frame and a less than full rate frame for each of the second speech frame.

17. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the first speech frames is a function of the selected decoding mode, and the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the second speech frames is a function of the selected encoding mode.

18. (New) The method of claim 17 wherein the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the first speech frames is further a function of one or more speech parameters of such first speech frame, and the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the second speech frames is further a function of one or more speech parameters of such second speech frame.

19. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the less than full rate frame comprises a 1/2 rate frame, 1/4 rate frame, or 1/8 rate frame.

20. (New) A speech coder, comprising:

a speech encoder having a plurality of encoder modes, one of the encoder modes being associated with a first average data rate; and

a speech decoder having a plurality of decoder modes, each of the decoder modes being associated with an average data rate different from first average data rate.

21. (New) The speech coder of claim 20 wherein each of the average data rates associated with one of the decoder modes is higher than the first average data rate.

22. (New) The speech coder of claim 20 wherein each of the encoder modes is selectable.

23. (New) The speech coder of claim 22 wherein each of the decoder modes is selectable, the speech decoder being further configured to select one of the decoder modes as a function of the selected encoder.

24. (New) The speech coder of claim 22 wherein the speech encoder is configured to receive a plurality of speech frames, and select between a full rate frame and a less than full rate frame to encode each of the speech frames as a function of the selected encoder mode.

25. (New) The speech coder of claim 24 wherein the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the speech frames is further a function of one or more parameters of such speech frame.

26. (New) The speech coder of claim 24 wherein the less than full rate frame comprises a ½ rate frame, a ¼ rate frame, or a 1/8 rate frame.

27. (New) The speech coder of claim 24 wherein the speech encoder is further configured to select the less than full rate frame from a ½ rate frame, a ¼ rate frame, and a 1/8 rate frame.

28. (New) A speech coder, comprising:

a speech decoder having a plurality of decoder modes, one of the decoder modes being associated with a first average data rate; and

a speech encoder having a plurality of encoder modes each being associated with an average data rate different from the first average data rate.

29. (New) The speech coder of claim 28 wherein each of the average data rates associated with one of the encoder modes is higher than the first average data rate.

30. (New) The speech coder of claim 28 wherein each of the decoder modes is selectable.

31. (New) The speech coder of claim 30 wherein each of the encoder modes is selectable, the speech encoder being further configured to select one of the encoder modes as a function of the selected decoder mode.

32. (New) The speech coder of claim 30 wherein the speech encoder is further configured to receive a plurality of speech frames, and select between a full rate frame and a less than full rate frame to encode each of the speech frames as a function of the selected encoder mode.

33. (New) The speech coder of claim 32 wherein the selection between the full rate frame and the less than full rate frame for each of the speech frames is further as a function of one or more speech parameters of such speech frame.

34. (New) The speech coder of claim 32 wherein the less than full rate frame comprises a ½ rate frame, a ¼ rate frame, or a 1/8 rate frame.

35. (New) The speech coder of claim 32 wherein the speech encoder is further configured to select the less than full rate frame from a ½ rate frame, and a 1/8 rate frame.

36. (New) A speech coder, comprising:

means for transmitting speech encoded at a first average data rate associated with an encoding mode selected from a plurality of encoding modes; and

means for receiving speech in response to the transmitted speech, the received speech being encoded at a second average data rate that is higher than the first average data rate.

37. (New) A speech coder, comprising:

means for receiving speech encoded at a first average data rate; and

means for transmitting speech in response to the received speech, the transmitted speech being encoded at a second average data rate associated with an encoding mode selected from a plurality of encoding modes, the second average data rate being higher than the first average data rate.